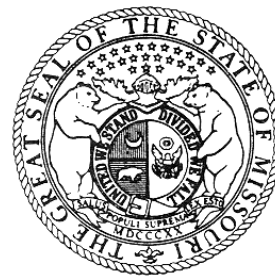


PRESS RELEASE

STATE SENATOR DAN CLEMENS – 20TH DISTRICT



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Missouri Senate

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 29, 2004

Weekly Capitol Report

JEFFERSON CITY – After extensive debate on Wednesday and Thursday, we have come closer to gaining first-round approval for the SMS name change. We have brought a positive level of understanding to the Legislature which will only help us succeed to win the Missouri State University designation. The name change properly reflects the level to which this university has risen, and how important it has become to our state. Southwest Missouri State University has long been an exceptional higher institution of learning, and we are moving forward to reflect their accomplishments with renaming it Missouri State University. I believe the proposal is good for our area, good for the University and good for Missouri.

The twelve-year battle to win the right to carry concealed weapons for Missourians continued two weeks ago as the state Supreme Court heard arguments about whether or not concealed weapons are constitutional.

Last year my fellow legislators and I successfully passed the override for the concealed weapons bill, protecting Missourians' rights to keep and bear arms. The law allows Missourians age 23 and older to receive concealed gun permits after passing background checks and completing a firearms training course.

A lawsuit was filed claiming that the Missouri constitutions prohibits people from carrying concealed guns. St. Louis Court Judge Steven Ohmer blocked the law on Oct. 10, one day before its effective date, on grounds it violated the constitution.

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I am confident that the Supreme Court will overturn Judge Ohmer's injunction, and uphold the law.

Last weekend I met with local educators to talk about funding for education. This topic has been in the forefront of debate during last session, and opinions differ on who is to blame. I remain committed to finding the best solutions for our schoolchildren. My fellow legislators and I have worked long and hard to gain funding for our schoolchildren. Despite our best efforts, the governor has used our children as pawns to push his own agenda. He withholds funds for education - \$197 million to be exact – based on the assumption that the revenue collections would be insufficient to fund the education budget. He then blames the legislature for not fulfilling their legislative responsibilities and cutting funding for our schoolchildren. I have talked with my constituents, local educators and parents about what they think we need to do to increase funding for our schools and our children. **I call on the governor to put the schoolchildren of Missouri first and release the funding withheld from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.**

Throughout the week, important measures have come up for discussion. SB 739 would require the Department of Natural Resources to report on the expected costs and benefits of new regulations before they became official. This measure, requiring the agency to produce a 13-point regulatory impact report on any pending rule, would address what he considers to be arbitrary decision-making by the DNR. Similar issues were debated last year, and the DNR took notice. Two weeks ago, the department implemented a requirement that an 18-point impact report be prepared on any new regulation. This new requirement has been included in the measure before the legislature, and will become part of the law if the measure is passed. This bill is important, because it provides the public more insight and participation in rules and regulations concerning hazardous waste, soil and water, petroleum storage tanks, land reclamation, and drinking water. The bill has won first-round approval, and now faces a final vote in the Senate before advancing to the House of Representatives. Joint passage of the measure allows it to become law unless vetoed by the governor.

I pre-filed Senate Bill 767 in December of 2003 to gain a head start on important legislation concerning the 20th District. This measure would designate the portion of Interstate 44

within Webster County the Edwin P. Hubble Memorial Highway.

Legislation important in protecting senior citizens from rising property taxes is also on the agenda. SB 730 would create the Missouri Homestead Preservation Act, which would protect senior citizens from rising property taxes, and help those who have to live on a fixed income.

This measure is a reasonable and sensible approach to assisting our state's senior citizens without hurting our schools or other public entities dependent on property taxes.

The bill would allow senior citizens and those who are disabled to obtain a credit against their property taxes that exceed a certain amount – estimated at around 5 percent.

The Senate Ways and Means Committee passed the measure out of committee, and sent it to the Senate floor for debate.

These are just a few issues we have been looking at. As always, I appreciate your opinion on any legislative matter. If you have any questions or concerns to share, please call me at 1-866-242-0810, or email me at dan_clemens@senate.state.mo.us.

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